

February 14, 2020

**Public Notice for Water Quality Certification and/or Waste
Discharge Requirements (Dredge/Fill Projects)**

SMART Windsor Extension Project

**ECM PIN CW-858778; WDID 1B190067WNSO
Sonoma County**

On May 29, 2019, the North Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board (Regional Water Board) received an application from Leslie Allen of WRA on behalf of Bill Gamlen of the Sonoma-Marin Area Rail Transit District (applicant), requesting Federal Clean Water Act, section 401, Water Quality Certification (certification) for activities related to the proposed SMART Windsor Extension Project (project).

Project Location

The project is located at on the SMART track alignment between Airport Boulevard in Santa Rosa and Windsor River Road in Windsor. The southern terminus is located at approximately latitude 38.5112 °N and longitude 122.7854 °W the northern terminus is located at approximately latitude 38.5474 °N and longitude 122.817 °W. The proposed project would cause disturbances to freshwater seasonal wetlands, freshwater seasonal wetland channels, streams, and riparian areas within the Middle Russian River hydrologic area (114.23).

Project Description

The purpose of the project is to rehabilitate approximately 3.5 miles of existing Northwestern Pacific Railroad tracks between Airport Boulevard and the Town of Windsor. The project will provide an extension of existing commuter rail service north to the Windsor Station. The project will involve removal and replacement of rail, ties, and between two and four feet of the existing rail support prism ballast and sub-ballast structural materials. Five existing bridges over waterways will be replaced or repaired and upgraded. Existing culverts will be replaced and extended, and additional culverts will be installed. Infrastructure such as signals, grade crossings, and switch and siding improvements are also part of the project.

Two miles of a 12-foot wide non-motorized asphalt pathway will be constructed along the rail alignment. The pathway will be constructed on its own narrow embankment, separate from the track embankment. Paving of the pathway will add approximately 2.4 acres of new impermeable surface to the project area and storm water runoff will be directed to adjacent vegetated areas. Two concrete box culvert undercrossings will allow the pathway to cross beneath the track. Three prefabricated lightweight steel truss bridge structures will be installed to clear-span Airport Creek, Pruitt and Pool Creeks, and East Windsor Creek. A safety fence will be installed on the rail side of the pathway.

A new station will be constructed at the north end of the project area in Windsor. The Windsor Station will have a 270-foot boarding platform and a pedestrian access ramp.

The station will be equipped with shelters, lighting, signage, bike lockers, and other amenities. Track reconstruction will extend beyond the platform for storage of rail vehicles. The platform and access ramp will add approximately 5,700 square feet of new impermeable surface to the right-of-way.

Construction Timing

The project is expected to begin in April 2020 and is expected to last two years. All in-water work would occur only between April 1 and October 15.

Impacts and Mitigation

Resource Type	Impacts	Mitigation
Freshwater Seasonal Wetlands	2.085 acres permanent	2.085 acres of mitigation bank credits from an approved Santa Rosa Plain Wetland Mitigation Bank
Freshwater Seasonal Wetland Channels	0.085 acres permanent	0.085 acres of mitigation bank credits from an approved Santa Rosa Plain Wetland Mitigation Bank
Streams	0.092 acres permanent	0.46 acres of mitigation bank credits from the East Austin Creek Conservation Bank plus on-site removal of treated timber infrastructure and debris
Riparian	0.107 acre permanent	0.54 acres of mitigation bank credits from the East Austin Creek Conservation Bank

Post-Construction Storm Water Treatment

The parking lots and station will comply with the City of Santa Rosa's Low Impact Development Technical Design Manual.

Other Agency Permits

The applicant has applied to the United States Army Corps of Engineers for an individual permit, pursuant to section 404 of the Clean Water Act. The applicant has also submitted a section 1600 Notification of Lake or Streambed Alteration to the California Department of Fish and Wildlife.

CEQA

As lead agency, Sonoma-Marin Area Rail Transit certified an Environmental Impact Report (SCH 2002112033) on July 21, 2006, pursuant to the requirements of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA).

Public Comments

Regional Water Board staff are proposing to regulate this project pursuant to Section 401 of the Clean Water Act (33 USC 1341) and/or Porter-Cologne Water Quality Control Act authority. In addition, staff will consider all phone calls and comments submitted in writing and received within a 21-day comment period that begins on the first date of issuance of this notice and ends at 5:00 p.m. on the last day of the comment period. If you have any questions or comments, please contact staff member Kaete King at (707) 576-2848 or Kaete.King@waterboards.ca.gov within 21 days of the posting of this notice.

The information contained in this public notice is only a summary of the applicant's proposed activities. The Regional Water Board's project file includes the application for certification and additional details of the proposed project, including maps and design drawings. Project documents and any comments received are on file and may be reviewed or copied at the Regional Water Board office, 5550 Skylane Boulevard, Suite A, Santa Rosa, California. Appointments are recommended for document review. Appointments can be made by calling (707) 576-2220.

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